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SOURCE Wen Hui Pao.

SINO-SOVIET POSTAL CONVENTION

Peiping, 28 February 1950, (Hsin-hua) -- China and the USSR on 7 February 1950 signed a postal convention concerning the exchange and transmission of ordinary, registered, and insured mail and packages via land, sea, and air routes. The full text of the convention is as follows.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Article 1

1. The People's Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have made the following agreement concerning the exchange and transmission between their territories of ordinary and registered mail, ordinary and insured valuation packages and letters.

2. This exchange of mail includes land, sea, and aerial routes. The actual postal routes are those mutually agreed upon in the treaty by both parties. In case of change, mutual notice should be given.

Article 2.

1. Through mail and packages and their pertinent documents should be placed in mail bags. Bags for this purpose should be durable, free from holes, and securely closed. When they have been emptied they should be returned by the first mail to the postal exchange point and a record made of the fact.

Article 3

1. Mail matter from or destined to countries other than the two contracting parties shall be limited to (only) such countries as have postal agreements with the People's Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

CONFIDENTIAL

- 1 -

CLASSIFICATION **CONFIDENTIAL**

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50X1-HUM

2. If mail matter of any other countries is handled by either of the two contracting parties, the other party shall be informed of the names of such countries.

Article 4

The date of beginning and ending the exchange of mail, the days and hours for the exchange of mail, and the hours for the exchange of mail on the borders of the two signatories shall be arranged by conferences between the central postal authorities of the two countries.

MAIL MATTER AND INSURED VALUATION LETTERS

Article 5

Mail matter includes letters, single and double post cards, trade contracts, all kinds of printed matter (including literature for the blind), and goods samples.

Article 6

1. The two signatory countries shall establish the following offices for the exchange of mail:

a. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; Moscow, Vladivostok, Alma Ata, and Tashkent.

b. In the People's Republic of China; Peiping, Tientsin, Shanghai, Harbin, Urumchi, Su-fu, T'a-ch'eng (Chuguchak), and I-li.

2. The exchange of mail on the national borders shall take place at the following stations:

a. In the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Vladivostok, Grodekovo station, Otpor, Bakhty, Irkeshtam (Soviet side), and Huo-erh-kuo-ssu (Soviet side).

b. In the territory of the People's Republic of China: Tientsin, Shanghai, Sui-fen-ho station, Manchuli station, T'a-ch'eng, Irkeshtam (Chinese side), and Huo-erh-kuo-ssu (Kung-ch'en) (Chinese side).

3. The post offices and stations for the exchange of air mail shall be determined by negotiation between the two signatories.

4. The post offices and mail exchange stations may be changed by negotiation between the signatories in case of need.

Article 7

1. Mail bags containing registered and insured mail should be securely fastened and sealed with sealing wax or lead seals. The destination should be written upon red labels. The sealing wax or lead seals should be very evident.

2. The red label on the pouch should clearly indicate the points of origin and destination of the pouch, the number of the pouch, and the date of sealing.

3. Pouches containing ordinary mail, whether for domestic delivery or for passing the border, should be closed and marked in the same way as indicated above, except that the label should be white or blue.

- 2 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

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50X1-HUM

Article 8

1. The numbers used to identify mail in passing from the exchange office of one side to the exchange office of the other side should be changed once a year, and these numbers should be used on both ordinary and registered mail receipts.

2. The mail exchange offices of the two signatories should see to it that the mail passes from one side to the other in proper sequence and according to the order of the numbers assigned. If this sequence is disturbed, the exchange office noticing it should immediately notify its opposite number.

3. When a sending exchange office has received a receipt from the opposite side it should be carefully checked all along the line.

Article 9

1. When mail is sent from one country to the other, the consignment should carry a tally sheet showing the destination, the number of registered bags (these should bear red labels), the number of bags of ordinary mail (these should bear labels of another color), and the total number of bags.

2. When registered mail is transferred from one side to the other, very careful attention should be given to the condition and securing of bags having red labels.

3. Bags of mail having labels of other colors (aside from those with red labels) may be received and passed in toto. All mail sacks passed through the exchange offices, no matter what the color of their labels, should agree in number with the number indicated on the tally sheet.

Article 10

1. All mail bags should be intact at the time of exchange, but should a bag be torn, this fact may not be made an excuse for not accepting it. In case a torn bag is received, it should be placed in a new bag and the items listed on its label recorded on a new label.

2. When a mail bag is thus placed within another, a notation of this fact should be placed on the tally sheet opposite its number stating the place at which this was done; the workers who make the exchange should sign their names as evidence and affix a date stamp.

Article 11

When a receiving exchange office discovers a discrepancy in the number of bags received as compared with the tally sheet, or finds a torn bag, a formal notice of this fact should be prepared and sent by registered mail to the transmitting exchange office by the first mail.

Article 12

1. The value of an insured letter may not exceed 1,000 gold francs $\sqrt{\text{FA-LANG}}$.

2. Insured letters may not contain dutiable goods.

3. The insured value of a letter should be stated in the currency of the country of origin, but computation in terms of gold francs should be made by the sender or the sending office at the day's posted rate of exchange.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

Article 13

1. Insured letters should be placed separately in a small mail bag sealed with sealing wax, bearing a stamp and accompanied by a VD No 3 form.

2. The small bag containing insured letters should be placed in the bag with registered mail or placed in a special safety bag.

Article 14

1. The cost of transmitting air mail matter should be computed on its actual weight.

2. The post office is responsible to the sender of mail as follows: If an insured letter is lost, the sender shall be reimbursed for the insured amount. If a registered letter is lost, a reimbursement of 25 gold francs shall be made.

3. All other questions not here specifically discussed, such as sending, receiving, and exchange, transport expense of mail crossing the borders, as well as other expenses, loss, surreptitious removal, reimbursement for registered or insured letters damaged or destroyed, etc., shall be settled by correspondence between the central postal authorities of the two countries.

PARCEL POST

Article 15

1. Parcel post exchange offices in the two countries shall be as follows:

a. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Moscow, Vladivostok, Tashkent, and Alma Ata.

b. In the People's Republic of China: Peiping, Harbin, Tientsin, Shanghai, Urumchi (Tihua), Ili, and Su-fu.

2. Parcel post shall be exchanged at the following border exchange stations:

a. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Vladivostok, Grodekovo station, Otpor, Bakhty, Huo-erh-kuo-ssu (Soviet side), and Irkeshtam.

b. In the People's Republic of China: Tientsin, Shanghai, Manchuli station, Sui-fen-ho, Huo-erh-kuo-ssu (Kung-ch'en) (Chinese side), Irkeshtam (Chinese side), and T'a-ch'eng (Chuguchak).

3. Exchange offices and exchange stations for parcel post may be changed, if necessary, by mutual agreement between the two signatories.

Article 16

1. Ten kilograms shall be the limit of weight for parcels sent between the two countries by private individuals and 20 kilograms shall be the limit for official or business firms' packages. Such parcels may be insured for not more than 1,000 gold francs. Ten kilograms shall be the limit for parcels passing across the territory of either of the signatories to other countries.

- 4 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

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50X1-HUM

2. Parcels exchanged between the two countries shall not measure more than 150 centimeters on one side and the combined length and girth shall not exceed 300 centimeters.

3. No parcel shall be insured for more than its actual value. The amount for which a parcel is insured shall be stated in terms of the currency of the country of origin, and shall be converted by the sender or sending office into gold francs at the current rate of exchange of the day.

4. The above mentioned (subdivisions 1, 2, and 3 of Article 16) weights, measurements, and insured values may be changed by either of the signatories with the concurrence of the other signatory.

5. With regard to the procedures of exchange of parcels between the two signatory countries concerning forbidden or special-permission mail, each country shall follow its own laws and regulations provided they are in accord with the provisions of this treaty.

6. The cloth or wood covering of parcel-post packages shall be sufficiently strong to provide for the preservation and security of the contents. The materials, whether cloth or wood, shall be of the same quality throughout. Insured parcels, if in wooden boxes, shall have an outer wrapping of strong cloth of uniform quality.

7. Parcels forbidden by both signatories from being transmitted in the mails exchanged between the two countries are:

- a. Parcels, the weight, measurements, and insured value of which exceed the stipulations of these regulations as stated in subdivisions 1, 2, and 3. above.
- b. Parcels not wrapped according to regulations.
- c. Parcels containing perishable goods.
- d. Over-size parcels.
- e. Collect-on-delivery parcels.
- f. Parcels on which export duties (two characters missing) TN: presumably, have not been prepaid.

Article 17

Parcels of the two signatories passing beyond their boundaries shall meet all the conditions recited above and any other conditions required by the other countries to which they may be sent.

Article 18

Each of the signatories may limit the acceptance and sending of packages in accord with its own laws and regulations, but should keep the other signatory informed of such limitations.

Article 19

Under exceptional conditions either signatory has the right to refuse to receive and transmit parcels at any place, but in such case, the central postal authorities of that side should immediately notify the central postal authorities of the other side. In case of sudden change, the notification should be by telegram.

- 5 -

CONFIDENTIAL ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

Article 20

1. Senders of mail should pay the full postage in advance. By full postage is meant all fees in connection with dispatch and transmission of mail matter which are due to the transmitting postal administrations.

2. Table of charges for postage on parcel post agreed upon by the two signatories:

a. Rates to be charged by the Soviet Union.

(1) Between the Asiatic portion of the Soviet Union and China: under 5 kilograms, 2 gold francs; 5 to 10 kilograms, 4 gold francs; 10 to 15 kilograms, 6 gold francs; 15 to 20 kilograms, 8 gold francs.

(2) Between the European portion of the Soviet Union and China: under 5 kilograms, 4 gold francs; 5 to 10 kilograms, 8 gold francs; 10 to 15 kilograms, 12 gold francs; 15 to 20 kilograms, 16 gold francs.

b. Rates to be charged by the People's Republic of China.

(1) Between the Chinese exchange offices in the Northeast, Tientsin, Shanghai, Urumchi, Su-fu, T'a-ch'eng, and Ili, and the Soviet Union: under 5 kilograms, 1.75 gold francs; 5 to 10 kilograms, 3.50 gold francs; 10 to 15 kilograms, 5.25 gold francs; 15 to 20 kilograms, 7 gold francs.

(2) Between all other parts of China and the Soviet Union: under 5 kilograms, 3.50 gold francs; 5 to 10 kilograms, 7 gold francs; 10 to 15 kilograms, 10.50 gold francs; 15 to 20 kilograms, 14 gold francs.

3. Charges for transmission of parcel post overland to points beyond the territorial boundaries of the signatories:

a. Rates to be charged by the Soviet Union:

(1) For each parcel, not in mail sacks:

(a) Originating in the Asiatic portion of the Soviet Union: under 5 kilograms, 4 gold francs; under 10 kilograms, 8 gold francs.

(b) Originating in the European portion of the Soviet Union: under 5 kilograms, 6 gold francs; under 10 kilograms, 12 gold francs.

(c) If carried by the Trans-Siberian Railroad: under 5 kilograms, 8 gold francs; under 10 kilograms, 16 gold francs.

(2) For parcels in mail sacks, by weight in bulk per kilogram or fraction thereof, including weight of sack:

(a) If place of origin is in Asiatic portion of the Soviet Union; 0.80 gold francs;

(b) If place of origin is in European portion of Soviet Union, 1.20 gold francs;

(c) If carried by the Trans-Siberian Railroad, 1.60 gold francs.

b. Rates to be charged by the People's Republic of China:

(1) For each parcel, not in mail sacks:

- 6 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

(a) Passing through the Northeast portion of China: under 5 kilograms, 1.75 gold francs; under 10 kilograms, 3.50 gold francs.

(b) Passing through other portions of China as well as the Northeast: under 5 kilograms, 3.50 gold francs; under 10 kilograms, 7 gold francs.

(2) For parcels in mail sacks, by weight in bulk per kilogram or fraction thereof, including weight of sack:

(a) Passing through the Northeast portion of China, 0.35 gold francs;

(b) Passing through other portions of China as well as the Northeast, 0.70 gold francs.

4. In addition to the above rates, the signatories may charge ocean-carriage fees, but these shall not exceed 50 centimes per package.

5. Insurance charges for parcel post between the two signatories shall not exceed 50 centimes per 300 gold francs insured value (or fraction thereof). Of this, 5 centimes shall go to the office making delivery. If sent by sea, 10 centimes shall go to the carrier.

6. The sending office has the right to charge the sender a service fee of not more than 50 centimes.

7. The delivering office may charge the recipient of a parcel a customs clearance service charge not to exceed 80 centimes. In addition a delivery fee may be charged, collectable on delivery, the amount to be determined by the country of delivery, but not to exceed 40 centimes.

8. Aerial postal rates shall be decided upon by future negotiations between the signatories.

9. Any change in the above (Article 20) fixed postal rates and fees shall only be made by mutual negotiation between the central postal authorities of the two signatories.

Article 21

The sender shall clearly indicate on the back of the sending form what is to be done in case the parcel cannot be delivered, using one of the following instructions:

1. Please return the package immediately.
2. Please forward the package to the receiver at his new address.
3. Please deliver or forward the package to another person.
4. Please discard the parcel.
5. Please give the sender notice of inability to deliver the parcel, using form prepared for this purpose.

Article 22

Nothing is to be written on the reverse side of the stub of a parcel delivery slip.

- 7 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

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50X1-HUM

Article 23

1. In case a parcel cannot be delivered and the sender has not given instructions for its disposal as indicated, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or the People's Republic of China, as the case may be, shall hold the parcel at least 2 months beyond the month in which it arrived, after which it may be returned to the exchange office of the country of origin without giving notice.

2. If the sender has requested that he be given notice of inability to deliver a package, the package should be kept for at least 2 months after such notice has been sent.

3. In case of return of a package, the sender must pay the return or forwarding expense, storage expense, customs clearance expense, and any other expenses incurred by the receiving office in accordance with the regulations of the respective postal administrations.

Article 24

In case of return of a parcel, or of forwarding to a third country, only the actual post office fees shall be charged, and no customs dues or any other fees whatsoever shall be collected.

Article 25

In case the wrapping of a package has been broken to the point where it is necessary to rewrap it in order to pass it across the frontier, a charge of 50 centimes for rewrapping may be collected from the receiving exchange office, which in turn may be recovered from the recipient of the parcel by the post office making the delivery.

In case such a package is returned to the sender, the original sending office shall collect this fee from the sender. The two signatories also have the right to follow this procedure with respect to through parcel shipments. In case repacking is required, a special notation to this effect shall be forwarded with the tally sheet.

Article 26

Each parcel should have a forwarding form and a customs dues statement in Russian or Chinese with a French translation thereof.

Article 27

If a parcel contains embargoed material or material that may not cross the frontiers to a third country, and if such fact is entered in the customs declaration, such parcel may not be confiscated, but should be returned to the country of origin. However, this provision does not apply if the contents of the parcel are explosives, easily inflammable material, opium, morphine, cocaine, or other narcotics, animals, etc. Such articles shall be handled in accordance with the domestic postal regulations of the signatories.

Article 28

1. The postal authorities of the two signatories should assume responsibility to the sender for loss, theft, or destruction of mail matter. The method of indemnification is as follows:

a. For ordinary packages not exceeding one kilogram in weight, 10 gold francs.

- 8 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

b. For a package over one kilogram, but less than 3 kilograms, 15 gold francs.

c. For a package over 3 kilograms, but not over 5 kilograms, 25 gold francs.

d. Over 5, but not over 10 kilograms, 40 gold francs.

e. Over 10, but not over 15 kilograms, 55 gold francs.

f. Over 15, but not over 20 kilograms, 70 gold francs.

g. For insured parcels, reimbursement shall be made according to the insured value.

2. The above-mentioned reimbursement shall be made by the post office of origin at the market rate in the currency of the country of origin.

3. If one of the signatories should make a reimbursement on behalf of the other, the second country shall refund the amount to the first country within 2 months of the date of notice issued to that effect.

4. In case indemnification is made for loss, destruction, damage, or theft, the sender is entitled to a refund of the various expenses paid under the provisions of Article 20, with the exception of the charges specified in sections 5 and 6 of said article.

5. The postal service of the two countries will not be responsible for indemnification for loss, destruction, or theft occurring through unavoidable circumstances.

Article 29

Any matters pertaining to the exchange of parcel post which are not regulated by this convention, may be regulated by correspondence between the two signatories.

SETTLEMENTS

Article 30

1. Monthly reports shall be made and mutual agreement reached concerning the parcel post business accounts.

2. After the statement of accounts of the last month of each quarter has been accepted, creditor offices should render an account voucher for the quarter in duplicate to the debtor office, which office, having verified the statement, shall return a signed copy to the creditor office.

3. Accounts due should be paid within 6 weeks of receipt of the creditor's account voucher. If not paid within this period, annual interest at 5 percent should be added for the period of delinquency beyond 6 weeks.

4. Accounts to be paid each quarter should be computed in gold francs. The debtor should transmit, through a bank in the capital of the creditor country, the amount of the creditor's currency equivalent to the amount due, or use any other method agreed upon by the two sides for clearing the indebtedness.

- 9 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

Article 31

The basic monetary unit employed under this convention is a gold franc of 100 centimes. Its weight is 10/31 of a gramme. Its fineness is 90.

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

Article 32

This convention regarding postal matters may be amended or supplemented in the future by mutual agreement of the signatories, as the expansion and needs of the postal service may require.

All business documents shall be in the French language.

Article 33

This convention shall come into force on 1 March 1950. It has no terminal date, but either party wishing to terminate it may give 6 months notice and the convention may then be terminated.

Article 34

From the date that this treaty comes into force, the treaty made on 20 November 1936 between the People's Postal and Telecommunications Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Postal Administration of the Ministry of Communications of the Chinese Republic shall be void. All of the above treaty is witnessed by the signatures and seals of the plenipotentiaries of both sides.

Done at Moscow 7 February 1950, in duplicate, both copies being in Russian and Chinese and both languages are of equal force.

Signed:

Plenipotentiary Representatives of the Ministry of Communications of the People's Republic of China.

Li Ch'iang (李 强)

Su Yu-nung (蘇 幼 農)

Meng Kuei-min (孟 貴 民)

Signed:

Authorized Representatives of the Ministry of Communications of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

R. A. Popov (包 包 夫)

A. S. Malinich (馬 林 尼 奇)

- E N D -

- 10 -

CONFIDENTIAL

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